



Socialist Worker

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WORKERS MUST FOLLOW
SCHOOL STUDENTS

STRIKE

FOR THE
CLIMATE
20 SEPT



BREXIT

Tory leadership rivals promise tax cuts for the rich

BORIS JOHNSON and Jeremy Hunt want us to know that they are really, really serious about leaving the European Union.

Whoever wins the leadership election, the Tories will continue as the party of the rich and the racists. But they will also remain weak—struggle can force them out.

>>Page 4

HONG KONG



Authorities in Hong Kong humiliated

PROTESTERS smashed into Hong Kong's main government building, the Legislative Council, on Monday—and ramped up the crisis facing the country's rulers.

The defiant action humiliated Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam and infuriated the Chinese state.

>>Page 8

GLASGOW

Serco bosses want refugees dumped on street

THE battlelines over Britain's racist immigration system have been drawn in Glasgow.

Activists were preparing to resist multinational Serco's planned eviction of 300 asylum seekers on Tuesday as Socialist Worker went to press.

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THE THINGS THEY SAY

'Rally against racism'

An unlikely appeal from the Daily Mail newspaper—it was calling for Jeremy Corbyn to tackle “rabid antisemitism” in Labour

'Everyone prefers their own race'

Singer Morrissey in an interview last week

'If borders are such terrible things then why did they exist?'

Morrissey's bizarre logic

'Politics is much, much worse than any of you can imagine'

Failed Tory leadership hopeful Rory Stewart isn't bitter

'It is genuinely a terrible thing'

Stewart continues

'For The Record.'

The catchy title of David Cameron's forthcoming memoirs

'I am not going to the fucking White House'

US footballer Megan Rapinoe

'Every crime must have its punishment. The liberal idea has become obsolete'

Vladimir Putin says the growth of populism is a backlash against immigration



Thousands of primary schools at risk as asbestos crisis looms

CHILDREN AND workers in over 5,000 state-run primary schools across England are at risk from asbestos.

Some 105 English local education authority areas responded to Freedom of Information requests made by the Daily Mirror newspaper.

The responses showed that asbestos, which causes cancer, was present in 69 percent of sites in the areas.

But the real scale of asbestos in schools will be far bigger.

Some 47 areas, containing 3,791 state primaries, failed to provide data.

And academies and free schools weren't included as they don't have to report to authorities on asbestos.

Some 319 teachers have died from mesothelioma, a cancer caused by exposure to



ASBESTOS IS banned but is still in buildings

asbestos, since 1980 according to the NEU union.

The Department for Education called on schools in England to report on how much asbestos they had in their buildings by 31 May last year. But in January nearly a

quarter—23 percent—had still failed to do so.

Asbestos was used in buildings from the 1940s until the 1970s, before being banned in 1999. It is also present in some housing blocks and hospitals.

A SCHOOL is so poor after Tory funding cuts that it has appealed to parents for donations.

The headteacher at Middlewich High School in Cheshire, Heidi Thurland, asked parents to donate £30.

In a letter sent to parents she said, “If funding continues in the current format there are very difficult decisions ahead on the curriculum we offer and how we resource it.”

Analysis from the Institute for Fiscal Studies last month said £3.8 billion would be needed to reverse 8 percent cuts in per pupil spending.

It said a further £1.1 billion would be needed each year up until 2023 to maintain spending in real terms, taking into account rising costs.

EX-WORK AND pensions minister Esther McVey grabbed £16,876 when she quit the cabinet—after making benefit claimants poorer. McVey resigned over Theresa May's Brexit deal last November. She'd “earned” the equivalent of £67,505 a year after being a minister for ten months—on top of her MP's salary. McVey admitted that Tory benefit changes would make some claimants “worse off”.



Esther McVey

THE TORIES have thrown nearly £200,000 of our money fighting Universal Credit benefit claimants in court. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) fought three cases. One cost £91,529, another cost £52,446 and the third £39,871.

The DWP lost all three—but is spending more cash to appeal.

Bankers make loads from Southern Water

FAT CAT investors at scandal-hit Southern Water have pocketed nearly £120 million in a year.

The company dished out £673 million to shareholders in the past five years. And 11 directors were paid more than £8 million, research by the GMB union found.

Southern is owned by a consortium of City investors, including major banks, which took out £119 million in dividends in its latest financial year.

Last week Southern Water was hit with a £126 million bill for dumping sewage in rivers and the sea and falsifying records.



THE Metropolitan Police bill for handling 11 days of Extinction Rebellion (XR) protests in April was £16 million.

Almost half the cash, £7.3 million, went on overtime for cops.

And just to show capitalism is flexible, a large amount of XR branded tat has appeared for sale on Ebay. The plastic decal car sticker is perhaps a step too far.

MADE OF gleaming copper and taking 120 person hours to be hand beaten out, this (pictured) is the designer bath Meghan and Harry have had installed in Frogmore Cottage.

The bath is produced by luxury firm William Holland.

It will have cost up to £5,000 to produce.

More than £7 million of our money has been spent on renovating and refurbishing homes for Princes William and Harry over the past seven years.

In the past five years, the Royal household has carried out some



A fancy bath for the royals

47 big projects, from conservation and water infrastructure at Windsor Castle to St James's Palace refurbishment.

The most expensive project in the last financial year, costing £2.4 million, has been the secretive works at Frogmore Cottage.

The project isn't finished so the bill could approach £3 million.



Lawrence cop cleared

A FORMER detective was cleared by a cop watchdog of trying to sabotage Stephen Lawrence's murder investigation.

John Davidson has repeatedly faced claims he had an improper relationship with the gangster father of one of Stephen's killers.

He has been cleared by the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

It had been claimed he had admitted a “corrupt connection” to David Norris's gangland father Clifford.

David Norris was convicted of Stephen's murder in 2012 alongside Gary Dobson.

Meanwhile Detective Superintendent Ian Crampton and Detective Chief Superintendent William Ilsley, who supervised him, were questioned last week over claims they committed misconduct in public office.

Two other officers involved in the first investigation—Detective Superintendent Brian Weeden and Detective Inspector Ben Bullock—are due to be questioned.



Ex-cop for Israel spooks

Ex-Met Police Commissioner Lord Bernard Hogan-Howe, (above) is supporting an Israeli firm's bid to introduce technology capable of tracking anyone carrying a mobile phone to within a metre.

Lord Hogan-Howe has joined makers Carbyne, which claims its system will only pinpoint the position of criminals and accident victims.

Lord Hogan-Howe declared his role on the company's advisory board in the register of Lords members' interests as an unpaid position.

But he has been granted share options.

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We need strikes—not just solidarity—over climate

by SARAH BATES

HOW FAR are we willing to go to prevent climate catastrophe?

That's the question every worker, socialist and activist should be asking in the face of an existential threat to our survival.

Action on 20 September, the planned date for a global climate strike, could change the entire debate around climate change.

Catastrophic events are sweeping the world—such as record-breaking heatwaves, fatal droughts and deadly storms.

Guadalajara in western Mexico suffered a freak summer hailstorm this week coating the city in 1.5 metres of ice.

Around 200 homes were damaged and dozens of cars swept away. Yet before the hailstorm, temperature there had been at around 30 degrees.

State governor Enrique Alfaro said, "Then we ask ourselves if climate change is real. These are never-before-seen natural phenomena."

But this is nothing compared to what is on the horizon.

Submerge

The planet's temperature is set to increase, causing rising sea levels. This could engulf large parts of Bangladesh and Vietnam, and completely submerge many small island states as well as coastal towns and cities.

Animal extinctions will continue to soar, threatening the majority of food production. Entire populations of major cities will be forced to migrate due to food scarcity, rising sea levels or other climate chaos.

The IPCC—the United Nations climate scientists' body—says temperatures can only rise one more degree before triggering the worst-case scenario.

It predicts a 5 degree rise by 2100.



THE AFTERMATH of a freak summer hailstorm in Mexico this week

And the IPCC has warned that a predicted two metre rise in global sea levels "could result in land loss of 1.79 million square kilometres, including critical regions of food production, and potential displacement of 187 million people".

Action is urgently needed. It won't come from governments—it has to come from ordinary people.

The past year has seen an inspirational movement blossom from

the despair created by climate chaos. More than a million teenagers worldwide took part in a school climate strike in March to demand a future.

And insurgent actions by Extinction Rebellion (XR) activists highlight the ever-present threat.

But this is not enough—we are facing an emergency.

That's why it's welcome that school climate strikers are calling

on workers to join them—not just in solidarity, but in coordinated action.

Friday 20 September could see millions of workers and students walk out together.

Workplace action has the potential to turn off the source of the corporations' profits.

And only a genuinely mass movement with workers striking can begin to take on those who sit in boardrooms and in cabinet meetings.

A good example of how workers can organise came from furniture company Wayfair in the US last week.

Some 500 workers walked out after learning the company was supplying goods to furnish children's prison cells in the border migrant concentration camps.

Maddie Howard, who organised the walkout, said she was "blown away" by the response from workers.

Flashpoint

She said that activists "had to do one-on-ones with the workers" to explain the issues.

But she added, "When something hits a flashpoint, you need to be ready to have each other's backs.

"And then strike when the iron is hot."

This type of spirit can transform confidence over how to fight back for the planet.

It's not enough to show "solidarity" with students. Workers have to match their conviction, organisation and courage.

There are over 30 million workers in Britain—and around 6.3 million are members of trade unions.

If a percentage of these walked out on 20 September it would boost workers' confidence to organise against the rich.

Activists in every workplace should start the process of discussing taking action to protect the planet and everyone who lives on it.

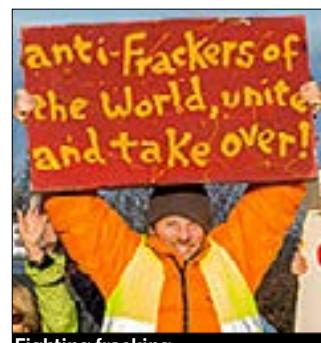
Activists convicted

THREE anti-fracking campaigners were found guilty of contempt of court last week.

It was a blow for the right to protest.

Katrina Lawrie, Christopher Wilson and Lee Walsh breached an injunction from fracking firm Cuadrilla in July 2018.

They staged a lock-on



PICTURE: NEIL TERRY

protest at Preston New Road in Lancashire, blocking access to the site.

It's the first time anyone has been convicted of breaching an injunction from an oil and gas company in Britain.

They are set to be sentenced in September, and could receive a fine and a suspended prison sentence.

The time to act is now

THOUSANDS of campaigners gathered in central London to declare the "Time is Now" to act on climate change on Wednesday of last week.

Organised by a coalition of environmental NGOs, activists met their MPs outside parliament.

A heatwave hits Europe

A HEATWAVE has broken out across much of Europe—with France recording its highest ever temperature on Friday last week.

Riot cops in Paris attacked Extinction Rebellion activists during a sit-in. Police used pepper spray to clear the 200 activists.

In the Spanish state, strong winds and high temperatures caused major forest fires to tear through Catalonia.

Hundreds of firefighters spent days fighting the blaze.

Breakfast in RED

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socialistworker.co.uk/breakfastinred

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'Struggle is still on in France'
bit.ly/StruggleFrance

Tax cuts for rich and EU promises from leader hopefuls

by SADIE ROBINSON

BORIS JOHNSON and Jeremy Hunt want us to know that they are really, really serious about leaving the European Union (EU).

The Tory leadership hopefuls are ramping up their rhetoric on Brexit in their efforts to become the next prime minister.

And because the Tory leadership election goes on until 22 July, weeks of similar nonsense lie ahead.

Hunt is so committed to Brexit that he said he would back leaving the EU without a deal even if it meant workers lost their jobs. Not a vote-winner among ordinary people, but maybe it works on Tories.

He also said he would pursue a no-deal Brexit if a plan to leave on the latest deadline of 31 October seemed impossible. But bosses, who overwhelmingly backed Remain, didn't like the uncertainty and threat that could pose to their profits.

So Hunt's main concern was to reassure the bosses that they wouldn't lose out under his leadership. He pledged to slash corporation tax even further—from 19 percent to just 12.5 percent—at a cost of £13 billion.

And after years of Tories telling us there's no money for services, Hunt pledged to hand over £6 billion to bosses in farming and fishing.

Raised

Meanwhile Johnson supporter and health secretary Matt Hancock raised the idea of pay rises for public sector workers.

Johnson made no actual promise to raise workers' pay.

But it didn't stop The Times newspaper declaring on its front page on Monday, "Boris Johnson to boost pay for public sector staff."

Johnson has spoken in vague terms about spending more **Newspaper lies**

BACK STORY

Voting in the leadership contest closes on 22 July

- Jeremy Hunt and Boris Johnson are the remaining candidates
- Both have promised to cut taxes for rich people and businesses
- Johnson last week launched a renewed attack on migrants. Go to bit.ly/JohnsonMigrants
- Whoever wins, the Tories will continue to be the party of racists and the rich

money. He claimed in a Sky News interview to want to raise the Living Wage—although he didn't know what the current rate is.

His ideas were mainly about how the government can spend more money to help business.

Johnson described himself as "somebody who has stuck for business through thick and thin" and has been an "evangelist for UK business". "That is what I will be if I'm lucky enough to be elected," he said.

Johnson also defended his racist description of black people having "watermelon smiles" and as "piccaninnies".

He said the phrases, made in a Daily Telegraph column in 2002, were made in a "wholly satirical way". He also said that the quotes, along with various other racist and homophobic remarks, had been "wrenched out of context".

On Sunday Labour's left wing shadow chancellor John McDonnell said Labour had to "move now" over changing its policy to campaigning for a new referendum and backing Remain. Another referendum would drive division among the working class, damaging the chances of a united fightback against racism and austerity.

McDonnell's call came after prominent left wing figures fell in behind a right wing attack on MP Chris Williamson.

Williamson was readmitted as a Labour MP last Wednesday after being accused of antisemitism. But he was suspended again just two days later following an outcry from right wing Labour MPs, backed



BROTHERS IN arms?

Left Labour joins in with right over Brexit and antisemitism smears

FRAIL, WEAK and unprepared for the pressures of being in government. Not Jeremy Corbyn—the Labour left.

Leading left wing figures in Labour have put themselves at the forefront of demands to capitulate to the right over Brexit and accusations of antisemitism.

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Williamson—not guilty

by prominent left wing figures. Williamson was suspended for saying that Labour's leadership had given "too much ground" to claims that it is riddled with antisemitism. He also said it had been "too apologetic".

The right claimed this meant he thought antisemitism was acceptable. In fact he was challenging the accusation that the left's support for Palestinians

makes it naturally inclined to antisemitic ideas. Williamson was readmitted by a three-person panel from Labour's national executive committee.

But a statement coordinated by right wing deputy leader Tom Watson made it clear the right will only accept one result.

"Ultimately it is for Jeremy Corbyn to decide on whether Chris Williamson retains the Labour whip. He must remove it immediately if we are to stand any hope of persuading anyone that the Labour Party is taking antisemitism seriously" it said.

Jon Lansman, founder of the left wing Momentum group, said Williamson "has to go" and accused him of "behaviour grossly detrimental to the party".

The Labour left hope that by throwing Williamson under the bus, they can show they are "tough" on antisemitism.

But as the victimisation of Williamson shows, every concession to the right only leaves the left more vulnerable. **Nick Clark**

IN BRIEF

Anti-racist pressure builds on Trump's reign of terror

ANTI-RACISTS in the US are organising against Donald Trump's plan to deport "millions" of undocumented migrants.

He said that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) border guards would begin removals this week.

Hundreds of Jewish left wing activists blocked the entrance to the Elizabeth Detention Centre in New Jersey last Sunday.

Supporters of the Never Again Action campaign group held signs saying, "Never again means close the camps", and chanted, "Hey, hey, ho, ho—racist ICE has got to go".

Police arrested 36 people on the protest. Dozens of Close the Camps rallies in solidarity with migrants took place across the US on Tuesday. They were

organised amid more revelations about the appalling treatment in detention camps.

"We must come together as Jews to fight back against ICE as they commit these atrocities."

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ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS

Trade and conflict at the G20 summit

THE G20 summit of leading economies in both the North and the Global South emerged to prominence at the time of the 2008 financial crash. It was seen as potentially more important than the older G7 summit of the leading Western industrial economies.

This promise hasn't been realised, in part because the so-called "emerging market economies" don't form a cohesive bloc with common interests. More recently the G20 has become a venue for the struggle between the two giants of the global economy, the United States and China.

This is what the strategic thinker Edward Luttwak has called a "geo-economic" conflict.

In other words, the antagonism between the states is being mainly expressed, not over territory and weapons—though this exists—but over trade and investment.

Donald Trump has had two main aims in this struggle. The first is to force China to buy more US exports. The second is to block president Xi Jinping's "Made in China 2025" programme, which is designed to upgrade Chinese industries technologically. This second objective lies behind Trump's campaign against the Chinese IT giant Huawei, which he has forbidden US firms to trade with.

The tit-for-tat game that the US and China have been playing of slapping tariffs on each other's exports threatened to escalate after talks between the two sides broke down in May. Trump raised tariffs on £158 billion worth of Chinese imports from 10 to 25 percent and threatened to extend them by another £237 billion.

But Trump and Xi had a side-meeting at the G20 summit in Japan last week and agreed to resume talks. The compromise was signalled by the announcement the day before that China would buy £158 billion worth of soya beans from the US.

US soya farmers have been among the main hostages in the trade war, along with Huawei. Rising living standards in China mean higher demand for meat, and huge soya bean imports for animal feed. China accounts for 60 percent of total global trade in soya.

In June last year Beijing slapped 25 percent tariffs on US soya beans, and switched to suppliers in Latin American countries such as Brazil.

It remains to be seen whether moves like this are more than gestures.

Collapse

Trump and Xi had a supposedly successful meeting at the last G20 summit in Buenos Aires a year ago, but this didn't stop the recent collapse of trade negotiations.

Trump's trip to North Korea will give China more leverage since it has the economic power to pressure Kim Jong-un over his nuclear programme.

But the summit seems to have been interesting because what the Financial Times calls "new dynamics emerged: with the US and China so focused on their bilateral trade war, the rest of the G20 could turn up the heat on both sides".

At a preparatory meeting of trade ministers in Tsukuba, China found itself isolated over both state subsidies to industry and overcapacity in its enormous steel industry.

At the same time the US was forced to agree to a common effort to reform the World Trade Organisation's dispute settlement system, which Trump had been boycotting.

One way of looking at this is that G20 member states—particularly the host Japan—are stepping in to fill the vacuum left by the effective abdication by the US under Trump of its traditional role of leading the advanced capitalist states.

This can work only to a limited extent.

This is partly because the world's biggest trading bloc, the European Union (EU), has turned in on itself. The impasse over who should take over the EU's leading positions, which are about to fall vacant, is a symptom.

More fundamentally, China's emergence means there is an increasingly powerful actor in the world economy that isn't prepared to play by the rules written by the US. The fact that the US under Trump also is tearing up the rule book increases the instability.

But having someone more palatable to the other main Western imperialist states in the White House wouldn't remove the antagonism. What is at stake in the longer term is nothing less than whether the US remains the dominant capitalist state.



PROTESTING AGAINST LGBT+ attacks in Manchester

PICTURE: MARK KRANTZ

'Pride is a chance to show anger at the attacks on us'

by SUE CALDWELL

PRIDE MARCHES should see outpourings of anger against the rise of attacks on LGBT+ people that we've seen in recent weeks.

That's why we took to the streets in Manchester on Friday of last week.

We decided to organise a protest after we heard about the homophobic attack on a drag artist and their friends last month. It happened in the same week that Melania Geymonat and Chris were left bloodied after an assault on a night bus in London.

We divided into two groups and put up posters saying, "Standing up to LGBT+ violence on Manchester's streets."

One group went around the Gay Village quarter and another on Oxford Road, where the attack on the drag artist took place.

Safe

We wanted LGBT+ people to feel safe on the streets—and the bigots to feel isolated.

And we're also trying to grow a network of people who can respond, so that attacks aren't just met with a few articles in the papers.

Jon Connor Lyons, an LGBT+ activist and Labour councillor, helped to organise the protest. He said the protests showed "we will

never be defeated in the face of anti-LGBT+ violence, homophobia and transphobia and all forms of discrimination against our community".

"Anti-LGBT+ violence is not new, it's been around a long time, but now we're seeing it being politically re-legitimised," he said.

Jon Connor attacked Tory leadership hopeful Boris Johnson and Nigel Farage's Brexit Party for supporting homophobic MEPs and candidates. He said, "Boris Johnson has called members of the LGBT+ community

The Gay Liberation Front takes to the streets in 1979

Bigots leaflet schools

BIGOTS ARE trying to spread the campaign against LGBT+ inclusive relationship and sex education (RSE) to east London.

They leafleted Little Ilford School, a secondary school in Newham, last week. The leaflet claimed that LGBT+ lessons "pervert the course of natural child development" and promote homosexuality to children.

This follows

homophobic protests by mainly Muslim parents outside two primary schools in Birmingham.

Newham NEU education union passed a motion defending RSE last week. It said,

"There should be for LGBT+ inclusive RSE in all schools—and parents should not have the right to withdraw their children."

As Michael Dance, an NEU LGBT+ national committee member, said, "We have to drive those people back."



Spreading the anti-LGBT campaign

'bum boys' and attacked Labour's campaign to repeal Section 28 in 2000."

Johnson called it "an appalling campaign and compared gay sex to bestiality".

We need a movement that stands against any attempt to roll back the gains that LGBT+ people have won and responds to attacks.

Pride in London comes just after the 50th anniversary of Stonewall—a riot in New York that gave birth to the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) in both the US and Britain.

The GLF was a militant movement that wanted to tear out the roots of oppression, not just win equality with straight people within an oppressive capitalist society.

Annie, a local LGBT+ activist, told the protest, "From Stonewall to the present day, Pride is a protest, Pride is a riot, Pride is a chance to show anger at the attacks on us and anger at oppression that still exists.

It is a chance to go and fight for a different world—for a truly liberated society."

That's the message we have to take out of Pride—and try to build a militant movement.

Sue Caldwell is an LGBT+ activist and member of the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP) in Manchester

More online
Stonewall was a riot
bit.ly/StonewallAt50SW

Workers strike against outsourcing in the NHS

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

HEALTH BOSSSES are pushing the latest form of backdoor privatisation in the NHS—but workers are resisting.

Over 150 support workers at Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust were transferred to Summerhill Supplies Limited (SSL) last Monday. They will now work for a “wholly-owned subsidiary”, a privately-registered company whose sole shareholder is the trust.

Wholly-owned subsidiaries make it easier for bosses to push for full-blown privatisation in the longer term by undermining workers’ wages, terms and conditions.

The board decided to press ahead with the outsourcing plans on the final day of a three-day strike by Unison and Unite union members last week.

But health workers are determined to keep up their fight to work for the NHS. Ian, a Unite member and electrician, told Socialist Worker, “People are being handed over to a private company against their will.

“We’ll be balloted again and all of us will be out again causing more disruption. This is not going to go away.”

He added, “I wanted to come out on strike for a week—we should have been doing this six months ago.”

Legal

Andy Chaffer, Unison branch secretary, said the unions want more strikes against the new employer SSL. He told Socialist Worker, “Unison and Unite have been looking at all legal aspects for going into strikes.

“We’ll be looking at everything possible.”

The three-day walkout showed the strength of feeling among workers—and that there is widespread support for further action.

Around 100 strikers protested outside a trust board meeting at the Uffculme Health Centre in Moseley, Birmingham, on Wednesday of last week.

Workers received solidarity from the FBU firefighters’ union, health campaigners, Labour Party members and other socialists. And a steady stream of cars and bikes tooted their horns and rang their bells in support.

Mary, a Unite member and domestic, said it was a



STRIKERS IN Birmingham vowed to keep fighting outsourcing

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

“bit scary being on strike for the first time”. But she added, “It feels good because we are all sticking together. This isn’t just about our jobs.

“It’s about the future of the NHS.”

A series of strikes in Wigan last summer forced bosses to back off from similar outsourcing plans—after the board had voted to press ahead (see column, right).

Other trusts dropped their plans after the victory.

The NHS Improvement regulator issued guidance instructing trusts to pause setting up new wholly-owned subsidiaries.

Bosses now want to get back on the front foot



On the picketline last week

and drive through privatisation. Bosses at Bradford Teaching Hospitals plan to transfer hundreds of workers to a wholly-owned subsidiary.

And Unison members plan a

seven-day strike from Monday of next week to stop them.

More strikes—and coordinating strikes across trusts—has the power to stop the renewed privatisation drive.

Warnings and opportunity

ONE OF many downsides of outsourcing is that it tries to put limits on workers’ organisation.

That is why it’s a shame that the Unison and Unite unions waited until the eve of the privatisation to call a strike.

For an official strike there needs to be a grievance with the new employer.

The workers should fight to be brought in house. And workers facing outsourcing need to take on the employers early. Other outsourced health workers

have scored important wins over pay in the last year.

This includes support workers at wholly-owned subsidiaries, showing there are possibilities to fight after a transfer has taken place.

Bosses at iFM at the Royal Bolton Infirmary were refusing to pay workers NHS Agenda for Change pay and terms and conditions despite previous promises.

Unison members held a two-day strike—and had already announced a further two-day strike.

The trust agreed to pay the same pay as those directly employed by the NHS. And since then workers at Liverpool Women’s Hospital, the Liverpool and Broadgreen hospitals and Doncaster and Bassetlaw hospitals have all won pay parity through strikes or the threat of strikes.

Say no to market tests

HEALTH BOSSSES are trying another method to outsource jobs—“market testing”.

This is where bosses look at how a publicly provided service stacks up against the private sector. The aim is to make the service more “cost effective”, and often the result is privatisation.

Most recently hospital bosses in Bedford have announced plans to market test their cleaning and domestic services.

Even if bosses choose not to privatisate the service, they can still use the test to discipline workers by using the results as a benchmark to measure performance.

And the threat of privatisation hangs over people’s heads.

The best response to a market test is to fight.

Bosses at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, Essex, tried market testing their cleaning services, saying they would decide whether to outsource jobs in August.

But Unison union members voted by 99 percent to strike—and called six strike days.

Bosses backed off before the first planned walkout in June.



Walkouts can win

STRIKES HAVE pushed back other attempts to transfer jobs to “wholly-owned subsidiaries”.

Bosses at Writhlington, Wigan and Leigh (WWL) NHS Trust planned to outsource around 900 jobs in the estates and facilities department to WWL Solutions last summer.

After bosses announced the plans, workers pushed the local Unison and Unite union branches to organise walkouts. Workers held two 48-hour strikes and a five day strike across May and June.

As they prepared another seven-day strike in July, bosses sent out letters saying they would be transferred to WWL on 1 August.

But workers didn’t buckle—and some rank and file activists began arguing for an indefinite strike to stop the plans.

Their action put pressure on the Labour council to stump up money and broker a deal, which meant bosses backed down.

Hong Kong protesters humiliate authorities

Militant action has deepened the crisis facing Hong Kong's rulers, reports **Sadie Robinson**

PROTESTERS SMASHED into Hong Kong's main government building, the Legislative Council, on Monday—and ramped up the crisis facing the country's rulers.

"For the longest time we wanted to get in here," said protester Edgar Kwok. "If we the people can get in here it means you have to listen to us."

Demonstrators used metal poles, shields and a metal gate they had unscrewed outside the building to break through the reinforced glass.

They came prepared with hard hats to fend off police attacks and fought for hours to invade the building.

Once inside, protesters spray-painted the Hong Kong crest above the Speaker's chair. They tore down portraits of officials and sprayed pro-democracy slogans on the walls.

The defiant action humiliated Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam and infuriated the Chinese state.

Extreme

Lam denounced protesters' "extreme use of violence" while the cops whined that Monday's protest was a "riot".

Yet state officials failed to condemn the extreme violence of police, who used batons and tear gas against demonstrators.

One sign held up in the Legislative Council read, "There are no violent rioters, only a violent regime."

And as one protester said, "Some people might say this is wrong but to us it is a necessary evil."

"One million of us marched peacefully, two million of us marched peacefully and yet the government didn't listen to us."

Protests took place on Monday to mark the anniversary of Hong Kong's handover to China from Britain in 1997. They followed massive marches against a new bill that would have allowed extraditions to mainland China.

This would allow China to target its political opponents in Hong Kong. A quarter of the population

BACK STORY

The movement in Hong Kong erupted over an extradition bill last month

- This would allow the Chinese state to extradite people to the mainland
- Protests forced authorities to suspend the bill
- Protests took place on Monday to mark the anniversary of when Britain handed control of Hong Kong back to China
- Britain ran Hong Kong without democracy until 1997

has taken part in the protests against the bill. They forced Lam to suspend it—but she hasn't fully withdrawn it.

Protester Edward Yiu told the Hong Kong Free Press, "She is only paying lip service to Hong Kong people. There is no democracy in Hong Kong and she only listens to her bosses in Beijing."

"That is why we need to come out and fight for democratic values."

Protesters are demanding that the bill is withdrawn, that Lam resigns and that all charges against protesters are dropped.

The resistance in Hong Kong is inspiring. The reaction from those at the top shows their fear of the power that ordinary people have when they fight back collectively.

Unfortunately some protesters held up a Union Jack flag during Monday's protests. This suggests that a Hong Kong run by Britain would be better than one effectively run by China.

But there was no democracy in Hong Kong under British rule. Most public protest was illegal and ordinary people lived in poverty.

Britain only got hold of Hong Kong in order to strengthen its position against its imperialist rivals, including China.

Protesters should look to their own power to win real democracy in Hong Kong.



PEOPLE FOUGHT to break through the reinforced glass of the Hong Kong parliament

South African miners say no to sexism

MINERS IN South Africa emerged triumphant from underground last Thursday.

Members of the Numsa union at Lanxess Chrome Mine began an underground sit-in strike against sexual harassment and victimisation on 19 June.

Top managers had sexually harassed and verbally abused a worker with impunity.

Other managers were supportive of the perpetrator, and criminalised the abused female worker. And the company had dismissed 52 workers over strikes and protests.

The workers stood firm for almost two weeks. Management prevented food being delivered and cut off the electricity under

ground, depriving strikers of water and ventilation.

Relatives of the strikers protested outside the Lanxess HQ on Tuesday of last week. Seeing the determination of the workers, management caved in.

The resolution includes placing the alleged perpetrator under special leave pending conclusion of the sexual harassment case.

And some of the dismissed workers were reinstated.

Lai Brown

Lai Brown is the Organising Secretary of the AUTOBATE union and the National Secretary of Socialist Workers League (SWL) in Nigeria. This is an edited version of an article that appeared on the SWL website. Go to bit.ly/Lanxesstrike



Strikers in South Africa

FIGURE IT OUT

50 degrees centigrade—the temperatures that people in Basra, southern Iraq, face while they also suffer power and water shortages

30 percent—the rate of unemployment in Basra, a city of around four million people

90 percent—the amount that Basra's oil exports contribute to Iraq's total revenue

NEW PROTESTS have erupted in Basra, southern Iraq.

The demonstrations are over corruption and poor public services.

They have been repressed by security forces.

Activists in Basra are protesting against power cuts and water shortages that make life unbearable as temperatures soar

to nearly 50 degrees centigrade.

They are also angry at multinationals profiteering from Iraq's lucrative oil industry, while ordinary people face poverty and unemployment.

The protests echo the demands of mass demonstrations last summer.

Demonstrators stormed and burned

government offices last year, and dozens of them were killed by security forces.

The Al-Monitor news website reported that security forces fired live ammunition during protests last Friday, but that there were no casualties.

One activist, Alaa Ali, told the Al-Monitor that the protests "will probably turn into strikes".

Angry protests return to Iraq

May has a record of increasing suffering

THE CLAIM made by outgoing prime minister Theresa May to have given a huge cash boost to mental health services is an insult to service users and everyone who works and volunteers in the sector.

As a volunteer for a local mental health charity, I have seen at first hand the impact of a decade of austerity policies on vulnerable members of the community.

Access to services has been cut to the bone. People who are seriously unwell—sometimes even suicidal—have to wait months to see a professional, never mind receive treatment.

There is a chronic shortage of mental health nurses, with little likelihood of enough qualifying any time soon as bursaries have been scrapped.

The charity sector, which has been forced to try and bridge the gaps in services has seen its funding squeezed.

By far the biggest cause of harm though is the introduction of Universal Credit. People who cannot work because of a serious illness have been trapped in an endless loop of claims, sanctions and appeals.

Thousands more people have been forced into levels of poverty that will have a devastating impact on their physical health and mental wellbeing.

May is seeking a legacy for herself after three years of failure. In the process she is providing a textbook example of her own, and her party's cynicism.

Adam Colclough
Stoke-on-Trent

Labour is wrong about Chris Williamson MP

I WAS delighted to see that Chris Williamson had been reinstated as a Labour MP.

And then dismayed he was suspended again.

The reasons given for his reinstatement were unsatisfactory. The national executive committee antisemitism panel seems to have been swayed by the potential for a snap general election.

But Williamson should never have been suspended in the first place. He was



I'm proud to be attacked by Daily Mail for defending NHS

THE DAILY Mail was outraged to see a motion passed at the recent British Medical Association conference that defended healthcare for all.

That reinforces my belief that we did the right thing.

I was proud to propose a motion calling for "the policy of charging migrants for NHS care to be abandoned and for the NHS to be free for all at the point of delivery".

The Mail responded with an attack on the front page, an inside page and an editorial.

There are attempts to blame migrants for problems in the NHS.

But the cost of treating migrants and overseas visitors is a drop in the ocean compared to the overall health budget.

Aspiring prime minister Boris Johnson says that we can afford £10 billion in tax cuts for the rich. Instead that money should go towards protecting an NHS for all.

Hunting for people who can be charged has led to racial profiling and an intensification of the Tories' hostile environment.

People who are perceived to be possible migrants or visitors are subjected to increasingly intrusive checks.

This creates an atmosphere where some people are terrified to access care, risking themselves and the wider community.

Aneurin Bevan, one of the pioneers of the NHS, wrote in 1952 that "it would be unwise as well as mean to withhold the free

service from the visitor to Britain. How do we distinguish a visitor from anybody else?

"Are British citizens to carry means of identification everywhere to prove that they are not visitors? For if the sheep are to be separated from the goats, both must be classified.

"The whole agitation has a nasty taste. Instead of rejoicing at the opportunity to practice a civilised principle, Conservatives have tried to exploit the most disreputable emotions to discredit socialised medicine."

Migrants built and staff the NHS. Stop all these racist measures.

Jackie Applebee
East London

SNP benefit move deserves two cheers

THE SCOTTISH government has announced a plan to boost the incomes of the country's poorest families by offering them £10 a week for every child in addition to child benefit payments.

It's such a big difference from the way that the Tories behave in their disgusting assault on people who are struggling to get by on benefits.

And it gives a foretaste of what an independent Scotland could do.

But there are limits. It will take years to come into



Nicola Sturgeon has a plan

families who qualify for means tested benefits such as Universal Credit and tax credits.

Parents will need to apply for the payment—and the Scottish government expects that almost one in five won't.

Means testing is always dangerous. Nevertheless this is the first time for years that many of these families will have cheered news about benefits rather than felt more gloom.

Yvonne Hill
Glasgow

Just a thought...

Bombs, oil and pollution

ONE MORE reason to hate US imperialism.

The US military is one of the largest polluters in history, consuming more liquid fuels and emitting more climate-changing gases than most medium-sized countries.

If the US military were a country, its fuel usage alone would make it the 47th largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, sitting between Peru and Portugal.

Hilary Sellers
North London

West no help in Hong Kong

IT WAS Hong Kong people themselves who won the suspension of the extradition bill.

None of the governments that met at the G20 summit in Japan played any part in this victory. It is a mistake to look to them to deliver solidarity and further victory.

There is much to do in Hong Kong to build on this victory.

The division between two union federations, one with 400,000 members and another with 200,000 members, needs to be resolved.

Lawrence Wong
South London

Don't betray over Remain

JEREMY CORBYN is being abandoned by some of his closest allies over Brexit.

Both John McDonnell and Diane Abbott are undermining him by voicing support for Remain. I fear this will mean electoral defeat at the next general election.

Everyone should get behind Corbyn.

Michael Barnes
On Facebook

It's '72 dead, nothing said'

JUST AFTER the Grenfell Tower fire, some of the media tried to blame a resident whose fridge had caught fire.

It reminded me of the New Cross fire in 1981.

In that example a whole number of lies were spread to distract from the cause. A huge march had the slogan "13 Dead, Nothing Said". The papers' strategy is the same today.

Will Counsell
Peterborough

THEY FLED WAR. NOW THEIR LANDLORD WANTS THEM... DUMPED ON THE STREET

Over 300 asylum seekers face being turned out onto the streets of Glasgow by multinational giant Serco. Alistair Farrow spoke to the tenants and activists on the frontline of resisting the evictions

THE BATTLELINES over Britain's racist immigration system have been drawn in Glasgow. Activists were preparing to resist multinational Serco planned eviction of 300 asylum seekers on Tuesday.

Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) Scotland held a protest on Saturday of last week. And the Glasgow No Evictions Campaign and Living Rent Glasgow tenants' union have already stopped one eviction.

Supporters descended on the Maryhill area to defend a woman who'd been told to leave her flat on Wednesday of last week.

This show of solidarity meant Serco didn't show up and said they would not evict her on that day.

Living Rent Glasgow said it is "ready to go on the offensive to defend our neighbours and our communities".

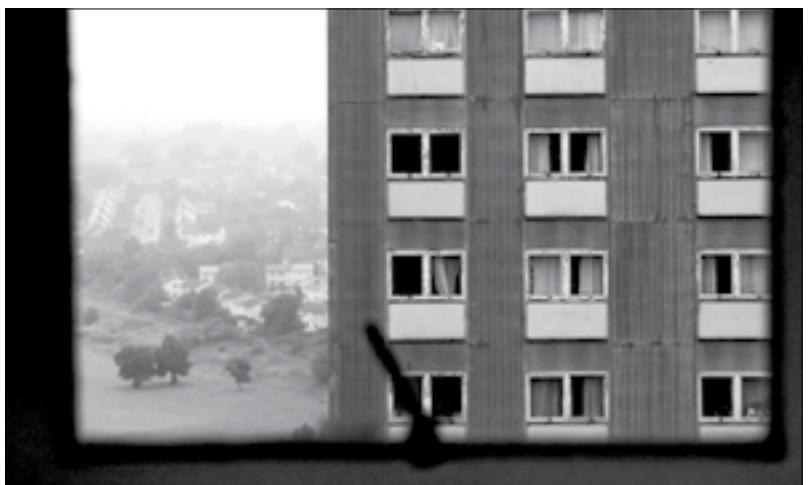
"We will not allow them to evict our friends and neighbours and force them onto the street," it said.

And it gave Serco an ultimatum on Monday and called on campaigners to resist any evictions. "If you're not yet signed up to help stop these evictions, join us and the thousands of Glaswegians ready to lock out Serco and lock out Mears," it said.

Serco has sent out hundreds of letters informing people that its agents will change the locks—some at just two days' notice.

That's because the new landlord Mears Group wants the properties empty when it takes over the contract in September.

Campaigners were rightly warned that "it would be premature to



'welcome' the new contract to Mears Group" when it won the contract in January. "The history of privately-run asylum contracts in this city is about the abuse of human rights."

Amir, an asylum seeker and Serco tenant, said the evictions would devastate people's lives. "If 300 people are turned out, they will not be able to get work and they will find it difficult to find other accommodation," he told Socialist Worker.

"Where are these 300 people supposed to go? The street? Where are the human rights? Why do people come to Britain, and not to Dubai? Because they think they are going to get some human rights."

"But people are stuck here with nothing, and are now being told there is nothing for them."

Serco said that it's been helping people, letting them stay when their asylum claims are rejected by the



Asylum accommodation in Glasgow is usually in run-down blocks (above, left) Theresa May, architect of the 'hostile environment' (left) Asylum seeker cradles young child (right)

“
People are stuck here with nothing, and we're told there is nothing for them



Home Office. "This pro bono support has been costing Serco around £1 million per year," it bleated. And it claimed that "most people have exhausted all avenues of appeal and no longer have the right to remain" in Britain.

Robina Qureshi, the Positive Action in Housing charity director, said Serco's claims are nonsense. She told Socialist Worker that the vast majority of people have "not exhausted their appeal rights", explaining that "some of these cases are very complex".

The spectre of racism has never been far from the Glasgow evictions.

Evictions
Robina explained that Serco has said "the majority of the people affected by the evictions were single young men" in order to delegitimise asylum seekers. "They want people to think that those affected are somehow undeserving," she said.

"There are many children and women who are affected. And why are young men not deserving of help? Can they not be vulnerable or in need?"

One of the tenants who've received a Serco letter is Mohammed, a 72 year old who fled from Syria when the war began. The letter, dated 19 June, said the locks would be changed within two weeks.

He is particularly vulnerable due to his age, ill health—and trauma from his experiences. While Mohammed left Syria with his family, they were separated during the arduous journey across Europe.

Mohammed has a serious heart condition and spine and breathing problems, which leave him bedridden most of each day.

Robina said, "They do not have the authority to advise people on the status of their asylum claims—but they have begun doing just that."

"People have been destitute for years and they have managed to win through. Why? Because they

FACT CHECK How the coalition privatised contracts

THE TORY-LIBERAL Democrat coalition privatised asylum seeker housing in 2012.

The Commercial and Operating Managers Procuring Asylum Support contract was worth a combined £620 million. It was the largest Home Office contract ever put out to tender up to that point.

Charities and other organisations warned that this would lead to a deterioration in conditions—and they were right.

A 2018 report into asylum seeker accommodation by the chief inspector of borders and immigration David Bolt was damning.

It found that less than a quarter of housing inspected was "compliant" and 43 percent was deemed "not fit for purpose".

Bolt slammed the Home Office for its non-cooperation. He wrote that because of "the difficulty of extracting evidence from the Home Office this inspection proved more challenging than most".

"It is clear from the Home Office's response to the draft report that this topic touches a nerve."

Other reports have been equally damning. A 2016 paper by academic Jonathan Darling from the University of Manchester found that privatisation "has predominantly resulted in a reduction in support provision".

It has also meant "gaps in responsibility for addressing complaints and a lack of long-term planning or consideration for integration".

persisted with their claim for asylum. They got evidence, and when that evidence was deemed insufficient, they got more evidence.

"When letters got lost they managed to get copies and send those in."

In a shocking case, Serco sent a letter saying it no longer had to house one asylum seeker because her claim had been approved. A legal challenge forced Serco to back down and apologised.

Bullying

There may be many stories of the firm successfully bullying people out of their homes. Serco provides accommodation for some 5,000 asylum seekers in North West England, Scotland and in Northern Ireland.

The Home Office has so far refused to comment on the evictions. But Amir was clear that the buck stops with them, saying, "The Home Office made the decision to give Serco this contract.

If 300 people are in the street, it is responsible. If the Home Office didn't give Serco money, they would not be able to do this.

"There should be a new system."

Robina argued that the 300 cases in Glasgow "should be turned into 300 embarrassing stories for Serco boss Rupert Soames." "CEO Soames and Serco seem to think it's alright to turf people out on the street when they no longer turn a profit for them," she said.

"That is unacceptable and it's uncivilised."

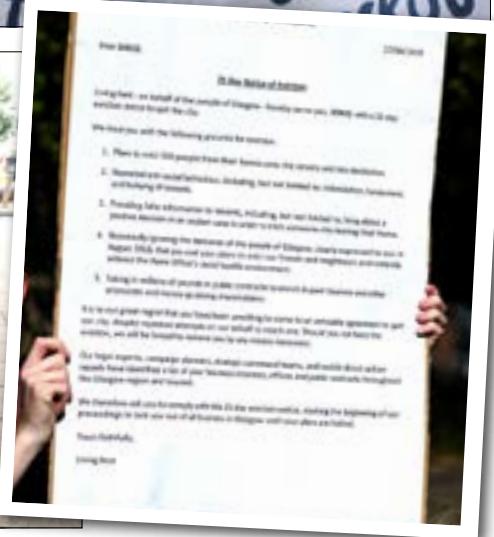
Resistance pushed back Serco when it tried to do the same thing last summer. Protests can push them back again—and give a taste of the kind of movement needed to win decent housing for all and rights for migrants.

Some names have been changed. Donate to Positive Action in Housing's legal fund justgiving.com/campaign/scotland-welcomesrefugees



Anti-racists protest in Glasgow last week (right) Asylum seekers on hunger strike in the city last summer (below) Campaigning letter from the Living Rent campaign (below, right)

PICTURE: ANDREW McGOWAN



FACT CHECK Complaints, fines and failures for Serco

SERCO WAS forced to cough up over £3 million between 2013 and 2018 for failing to provide adequate accommodation for asylum seekers.

The Home Office claims the "service credits" are not fines.

Yet the deductions were made because Serco had failed to meet "key performance indicators" (KPIs).

These include failing to carry out essential repairs and failing to make improvements to pre-agreed standards.

There were 454 complaints recorded against Serco in Scotland and Northern Ireland between April 2016 and March 2018. And multiple government agencies have found Serco to be failing in its duties to house people.

Despite a litany of failures Serco was issued with new contracts—worth £1.9 billion—to provide asylum seeker housing in England in January.

It makes a mockery of the Home Office's claim there was an "open and fair procurement exercise".

Robina said, "Local authorities were told not to bother applying for the contracts." Provision of housing must be brought back into local authority ownership.



WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

BLACK COUNTRY

Repression and resistance—where next for the Sudanese revolution?

Wed 17 Jul, 7.15pm, St. Peter's Café, 4 Exchange St, Wolverhampton, WV1 1TS

PORTSMOUTH

60 years on from the revolution—where is Cuba going?

Wed 31 Jul, 7.30pm, Somerstown Community Centre, River's St, PO5 4EZ

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

ABERDEEN

Rebellions, disobedience and arrests—what is the role of the police?

Mon 8 Jul, 6pm, The Snug, Ma Cameron's, 6-8 Little Belmont St, AB10 1JG

BARNSLEY

Marxism and philosophy

Thu 11 Jul, 7pm, Room 302—the Civic, Hanson St, S70 2HZ

BRADFORD

Sudan and Algeria—resistance, revolt and revolution

Thu 25 Jul, 7pm, Glyde House, Little Horton Lane (opposite the ice rink), BD5 0BQ

BRISTOL

Gandhi, mass disobedience and the end of British rule

Thu 11 Jul, 7.30pm, YHA, 14 Narrow Quay, BS1 4QA

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Socialists, anti-racism and Marxism in 2019

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Red Triangle Cafe, 160 St James's St, BB11 1NR

CARDIFF

Why we hate Mondays—Marxism and alienation

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Cathays Community Centre, Cathays Terrace, CF24 4HX

CHESTERFIELD

Socialists, anti-racism and Marxism in 2019

Thu 11 Jul, 7pm, Chesterfield Library, New Beetwell St, S40 1QN

COLCHESTER

50 years since Stonewall—why do LGBT+ people still face violence?

Thu 25 Jul, 8pm, Oyster Room, Hythe Community Centre, 1 Ventura Dr, CO1 2FG

COVENTRY

Do we need violence to achieve real change?

Wed 17 Jul, 7.30pm, The Golden Cross, 8 Hay Ln, CV1 5RF

EDINBURGH

Know your enemy—alt-right, the far right and fascists

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, 7 Victoria St, EH1 2JL

GLASGOW

Where does sexism come from?

Thu 11 Jul, 7pm, Avant Garde, 33-44 King St, Merchant City, G1 5QT

SOCIALIST WORKER PUBLIC MEETINGS



Trump and imperialism—could he start a war with Iran?

BIRMINGHAM

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, The Church at Carrs Lane, Carrs Ln, B4 7SX

DERBY

Thu 11 Jul, 7pm, West End Community Centre, Mackworth Rd, DE22 3B

EXETER

Wed 17 Jul, 7pm, The Exeter peace shop, 31 New Bridge St, EX4 3AH

NORWICH

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Vauxhall Centre, Johnson Place, NR2 2SA

BOLTON

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St (off Bradshawgate), BL1 1DY

DUDLEY

Wed 10 Jul, 8pm, The What Centre, 23 Coventry St, Stourbridge, DY8 1EP

KENT

Thu 11 Jul, 7.30pm, Nucleus Arts Centre, 272 High St, Chatham, ME4 4BP

SOUTHAMPTON

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Central Baptist Church Hall, Devonshire Rd, SO15 2GY

BRIGHTON

Thu 11 Jul, 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, Ship St, BN1 1AF

DUNDEE

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Dundee Voluntary Action, 10 Constitution Rd, DD1 1LL

LUTON

Wed 17 Jul, 7.30pm, Stockwood Hotel, 41-43 Stockwood Crescent, LU1 3SS

HARLOW

Popular fronts and united fronts

Thu 11 Jul, 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, 1 Church Leys, CM18 6BX

HUDDERSFIELD

The Peterloo Massacre—the fight for democracy and freedom

Wed 10 Jul, 6.30pm, Brian Jackson House, 2 New North Parade, HD1 5JP

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE

Reform or revolution—which way forward?

Thu 11 Jul, 7pm, Friends Meeting House, Meeting House Ln, LA1 1TX

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

Is our diet destroying the planet?

Thu 18 Jul, 7pm, The Swarthmore Education Centre, 2-7 Woodhouse Sq, LS3 1AD

LIVERPOOL

Rebellions, disobedience and arrests—what is the role of the police?

Thu 18 Jul, 7pm, Friends Meeting House, 22 School Ln, L1 3BT

LONDON: HACKNEY

How do we get real socialist change?

Thu 11 Jul, 7.30pm, The Round Chapel, 2 Powerscroft Rd, E5 0PU

LONDON: HARINGEY

The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, St John Vianney Church Hall, 386 West Green Rd (corner Vincent Rd), N15 3QH

LONDON: ISLINGTON

Who is responsible for the climate catastrophe?

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, The Old Fire Station, 84 Mayton St, N7 6QT

LONDON: KINGSTON

Music and the politics of resistance

Thu 25 Jul, 6.30pm, Kingston Quaker Centre, Fairfield East, KT1 2PT

LONDON: NEWHAM

Race, class and identity

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, Stratford Advice Arcade, 107-109 The Grove, E15 1HP

LONDON: SOUTH

60 years since the revolution—where is Cuba going?

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, Vida Walsh Centre, 2b Saltoun Rd, Brixton, SW2 1EP

LONDON: SOUTHEAST

Trump, Bernie Sanders and the new left in the US

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, Deptford Lounge, 9 Giffin St, SE8 4RH

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Rebellions, disobedience and arrests—what is the role of the police?

Organised by Dorset Socialists

MILTON KEYNES

Booklaunch: Common Cause—with author Kate Hunter

Fri 19 Jul, 6pm, Waterstones, The Centre, 51-53 Silbury Blvd, MK9 3AG

NATIONAL

Cuba, the Pink Tide and revolution in Latin America

Sat 26 Oct, 2.30pm, Central London. Hosted by International Socialism Journal. Go to isj.org.uk

NEWCASTLE

What would a socialist society look like?

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, Floor 2—Commercial Union House, 39 Pilgrim St, NE1 6QE

NOTTINGHAM

50 years since Stonewall—why do LGBT+ people still face violence?

Wed 10 Jul, 7pm, International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Rd, NG1 3FN

OXFORD

Rebellions, disobedience and arrests—what is the role of the police?

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Restore Building, Manzil Way, OX4 1YH

PORTSMOUTH

50 years since Stonewall—why do LGBT+ people still face violence?

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Somerstown Community Centre, River's St, PO5 4EZ

SCARBOROUGH

Capitalism and fashion—what will you wear to the revolution?

Wed 10 Jul, 7.30pm, Tap and Spile, 94 Falsgrave Rd, YO12 5AZ

SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

Sudan and Algeria—resistance, revolt and revolution</

Harlem 1969—a forgotten festival of the oppressed

A new book by journalist **Stuart Cosgrove** uncovers the story of the historic Harlem Cultural Festival. He spoke to Alistair Farrow about its legacy today

FIFTY YEARS ago a huge cultural event took place in New York City. It saw hundreds of thousands of people flock to the Mount Morris Park in Harlem to listen to the soul stars of the day throughout July and August 1969.

Yet so few people know about the Harlem Cultural Festival, compared to Woodstock that took place at the same time.

A new book by Stuart Cosgrove, *Harlem '69—the Future of Soul*, tells the story of this forgotten event. “It should really be up there as the number one top festival of all time,” he told Socialist Worker.

“History is often written by the mainstream and the mainstream wants to talk about events such as the Woodstock and Isle of Wight festivals.

“It wants to talk about musicians such as Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones.

“That’s alright, but Nina Simone is one of the all-time greats. And in Harlem she did a festival which took place at the height of the Black Power movement, which was talking about revolutionary politics.”

Obscurity

The festival’s obscurity is no accident. A slew of reporters covered Woodstock, while just one TV producer, Harold Tulchin, filmed it on second hand cameras.

He remembers, “It was a peanuts operation, because no one really cares about black shows.”

The festival was the brainchild of Tony Lawrence, an employee of the parks and recreation department of New York City.

Mayor John Lindsay asked him to put on the event, having already seen a concert organised by him.

Lindsay wanted him to repeat it on a grander scale in the summer of 1969—an election year.

Lawrence obliged—but the febrile political atmosphere of the time did not leave the city’s festival untouched.



Nina Simone's set was a call to arms for black people to resist oppression by any means necessary



“The atmosphere was very politicised,” explained Stuart.

“Harlem was a lightning rod for a hell of a lot of political moments and movements.

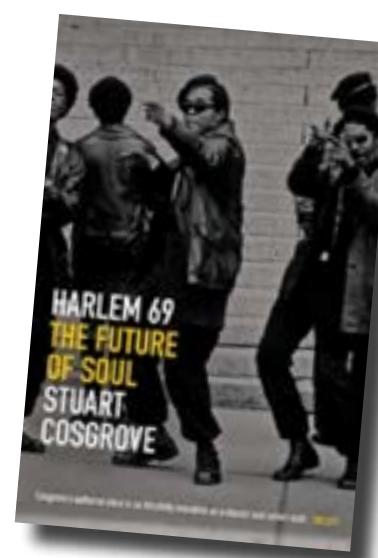
“This was less than two years after Martin Luther King was assassinated. The festival took place in an area of New York where Malcolm X had been assassinated five years previously.”

The first weekend of the festival was immediately after the Stonewall Riots that gave birth to the gay liberation movement.

And the revolutionary Black Panthers used the festival to organise and raise funds for their 21 members on trial at the time.

Nina Simone’s set was a call to arms.

Its crescendo was a reading of a poem by David Nelson of The Last



THE HARLEM Cultural Festival (left) brought together hundreds of thousands of people. It saw performances from Stevie Wonder (above) and other artists

Poets’ collective, which centred on Malcolm X’s phrase, “By any means necessary.”

Simone asked the crowd, “Are you ready, black people?”

“Are you ready to do what is necessary?

“Are you ready to smash white things, to burn buildings, are you ready? Are you ready to build black things?”

The film remains hidden away in an archive, apart from some short clips on YouTube, and until it is released the full significance of the Harlem Cultural Festival will remain underplayed.

But Stuart’s book is an important antidote to the mainstream silence.

Harlem '69—The Future of Soul is available from Bookmarks—the socialist bookshop

FILM

KURSK

Out now on limited release

KURSK—THE Last Mission, tells the story of a Russian submarine disaster in 2000. It is for people who like war and disaster films.

But it also gives a snapshot of Russian society and how those in power treat people with contempt.

The story is told well through the eyes of lieutenant Mikhail Averin, his wife Tanya and son Misha.

The beginning looks at their lives in a society that’s crumbling. Onshore wages are unpaid and at sea they’re faced with



Officer Mikhail Averin

faulty equipment. After an explosion rips through the submarine, a handful of people are left alive in one of the compartments. Tensions explode between their families and military authorities.

Like any imperial power, Russia wouldn’t countenance help for fear of national humiliation—until it was too late.

The film is a thrilling dramatisation of a turning point in Russian history.

It allowed president Vladimir Putin to take on his opponents, who he blamed, and rebuild the military on the backs of the Kursk’s 118 dead.

Tomáš Tengely-Evans

TOP 5 BOOKS

Bestsellers at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

1	This Is Not A Drill Extinction Rebellion
2	No one is too small to make a difference Greta Thunberg
3	Communist Manifesto Karl Marx and Frederick Engels
4	Rise Like Lions Mark Krantz
5	Land and Labour Martin Empson

Phone 020 7637 1848
bookmarksbookshop.co.uk
Why not visit the shop
at 1 Bloomsbury Street,
London WC1B 3QE

What's behind the decision to produce System Change not Climate Change? The school climate strikes, Extinction Rebellion (XR) and others have opened up debates about how you can end the destruction of the environment.

We've seen an emergence of a new environmental movement.

"System change not climate change" is a popular slogan on the demonstrations—but this can mean all sorts of things to different people.

What we wanted to do with this book is put an argument that you have to fundamentally challenge capitalism if you want a sustainable society.

Capitalism puts fossil fuels before anything else, and accumulates wealth just for the sake of it.

Since 1988 just 100 fossil fuel companies have been responsible for 71 percent of global emissions.

Fossil fuels were key to the development of industrial capitalism, and today ditching them would mean unprecedented financial losses for the bosses.

So to win a sustainable society, you have to tackle the logic of capitalism.

The book really is a combination of arguments about why capitalism is the problem.

But it also looks at issues of plastic, biodiversity loss, agriculture and many others.

It ties these questions together and argues that ultimately socialism is the answer to climate chaos.

We hope the book can help to arm radicals of all different traditions with arguments to help clarify what we need to do in the movement.

How has the urgent mood around climate change shaped the book?

If you had said to me at the beginning of the year that major trade unions would be discussing strikes over the climate I wouldn't have believed you.

The call for workers to join students on a general climate strike on 20 September has found an echo.

We don't know what will happen in September.

But the actions of the students and XR have opened up new arguments and debate in the workers' movement and trade unions about workers being part of that struggle.

We have examples to draw on. In one chapter of the book, two Canadian socialists write about the enormous environmental impact of mining oil tar sands.

They describe how indigenous people, workers and others have formed a formidable coalition.

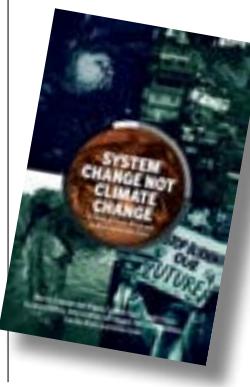
There is enormous



EXTINCTION REBELLION actions have helped reinvigorate the climate movement PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

IS A GREEN FUTURE POSSIBLE?

As the global movement to save the planet grows deeper, Martin Empson spoke to Sarah Bates about a new book on what caused climate chaos—and how we can stop it



potential for 20 September. We're starting to see meetings with the Campaign Against Climate Change, trades councils and those on the left.

People are having serious discussions about how we can organise to take action. This has never happened before.

Socialists should get involved in the new environmental movement. And people should make

The system's use of the natural world degrades it for profit

links with other movements. For instance, there was a big Stand Up To Racism summit in Manchester recently and a key discussion was about climate refugees.

As climate change deepens, racism will be directed at those fleeing natural destruction. Anti-racist activity will be part of the response.

It's not just about one day of action on 20 September. It's about building a movement to fight in the longer term.

System change not Climate Change book launch at Marxism Festival—10am Saturday 6 July. With Ian Angus, Martin Empson and others. Go to marxismfestival.org.uk

What arguments should socialists take into the environmental movement? We need more theoretical discussion about the climate crisis, analysis of capitalism and the roots of ecological catastrophe.

The book also looks at the Anthropocene—the theory that Earth is entering a geological period shaped by human intervention. There's more detail about what Karl Marx had to say about the natural world.

And contemporary debates are taken up around the importance of being involved in social movements.

We need to tie up different strands of revolutionary politics into coherent arguments.

Can you get an ethical capitalism? Should socialists support a Green New Deal radical programme of reforms? Should we have a vegetarian diet?

The book takes these arguments seriously. But it argues that the crisis is part of the nature of the society we live in, and that individual action isn't the end point.

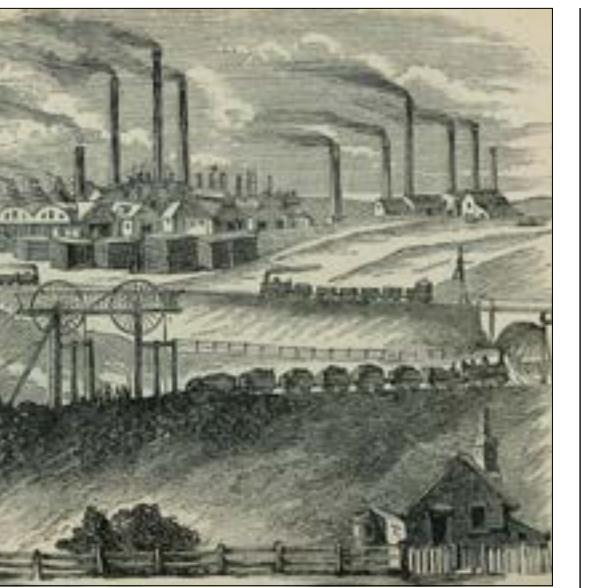
Activists should deepen their understanding of the nature of the environmental crisis. It's not just climate change, but biodiversity loss, a crisis of the natural world, what agriculture has done to the forests and so on.

The book talks about "transformative system change". What does this mean and why does it matter?

I think this is one question where socialists have something different to offer the environmental movement.

Because we argue the solution doesn't lie in a nicer or "greener" capitalism.

Because we are physical beings, we have always depended and always will depend on exchanges of matter and energy with the rest of the natural world.



COAL PITS in the Black Country in the 1870s—fossil fuels built capitalism

'We depend on exchanges of matter with the natural world'

MARX AND Engels viewed humans as part of and dependent upon the rest of the natural world.

They began from the fact that we cannot do anything unless we obtain food, air, water and other essentials from the world around us.

Nature, Marx wrote, is "man's inorganic body"—that is, an essential part of us that is not contained in our biological organs.

"Man lives from nature, ie nature is his body, and he must maintain a continuing dialogue with it if he is not to die."

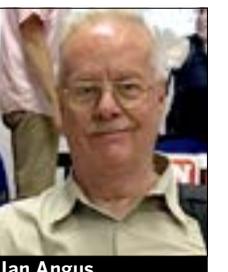
Because we are physical beings, we have always depended and always will depend on exchanges of matter and energy with the rest of the natural world.

That mutual dependence is the first principle of historical materialism, but if we stop there, we miss the next principle, that the ways in which humans obtain the necessities of life from nature have changed through history.

In order to understand the specific relationship between any particular social order and the natural world, we must look beyond humans as physical beings and examine the concrete social circumstances in which they produce and reproduce.

That's particularly important with capitalist society, which has separated most humans from the natural world.

Extract from a chapter written by Ian Angus



Ian Angus

'Organised socialists should be at the heart of movement'

THE GREEN New Deal in the United States sets forth a plan for a national mobilisation to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

At the same time, investments in infrastructure and carbon-free energy would develop millions of well-paying climate jobs in ten years.

Included in this is prior consent from Indigenous people if their land is impacted in any way, as well as a just transition with wage and benefit guarantees for all workers that would be affected by the job losses.

This proposal has already had a major impact on the political terrain in the United States.

Extract from a chapter written by Carolyn Egan and Michelle Robidoux

urgently needed today. It can provide a real alternative to the right-wing populism that is drawing many disaffected people to its cause, and put forward progressive options for a better life that actually challenges capitalism itself.

This is a moment to build strong alliances that can put workers, Indigenous people, youth and racialised communities first.

It can become a movement that fights for economic, racial and social equity and take on the logic of the system.

Organised socialists should be at the heart of this movement.

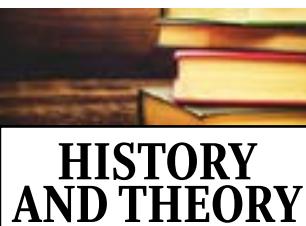
Extract from a chapter written by Carolyn Egan and Michelle Robidoux



Carolyn Egan



Michelle Robidoux



HISTORY AND THEORY

Alexandra Kollontai—fighting for liberation and freedom

This new Rebel's Guide is a critical tool for understanding the struggle today, argues Gabby Thorpe

THE LIFE of leading revolutionary Alexandra Kollontai is explored in a new Rebel's Guide by author Emma Davis.

The book, released this month, analyses Kollontai's ideas, and shows how her writings about women are still relevant today.

Kollontai played a critical role in the 1917 Russian Revolution, in particular around issues of women's oppression and sexual liberation.

Alongside German revolutionary Clara Zetkin, Kollontai was part of establishing International Women's Day in 1910—a tradition still celebrated today.

Kollontai believed that women's liberation is intrinsically linked to workers' struggle and that, without a mass movement, it's impossible to defeat oppression.

She argued against middle class feminists, who fought for limited rights for women under class society but turned their backs on poor women.

And she railed against activists who argued that men were responsible for women's oppression.

She wrote that women's liberation was only possible through the "fundamental transformation of the present social order".

Indivisible Kollontai said that "the movement of women workers is by its very nature an indivisible part of the general workers' movement".

The Rebel's Guide explores how Kollontai's ideas are built on Frederick Engels's writings on the link between women's oppression and the rise of class society.

In particular, Engels argued that the nuclear family unit reinforces women's oppression under capitalism.

Kollontai described how working class women



KOLLONTAI ARGUED for a unified struggle



experienced a "double burden" of exploitation at work and shoulder the responsibility for housework and childrearing at home.

She also dedicated much of her writing to exploring how capitalism impacted on people's sexual relationships.

Her writing left some other socialists worried that her ideas about relationships would alienate male workers.

All these gains were rolled back under the rule of Joseph Stalin.

Kollontai was relocated to Norway and she lived abroad as a diplomat for the rest of her life.

Tragically, Kollontai defended Stalin's rule, even though he had systematically wiped out the gains made by women.

Kollontai fought for a unified struggle against a capitalist system. Her insights are vital for understanding that struggle today.

A Rebel's Guide to Alexandra Kollontai is available from Bookmarks. It will be launched on Saturday 6 July at Marxism Festival. Go to marxismfestival.org.uk

She fought to ensure working women were at the heart of the revolution

How police contributed to Darren's death

by SADIE ROBINSON

ACTIONS BY the police "contributed" to the death of a black man in Coventry in 2017, an inquest has found.

Darren Cumberbatch died in hospital in July 2017, nine days after being punched, stamped on, Tasered and hit with a baton by cops.

The inquest jury returned a narrative conclusion last week, finding that "the police's restraint of Darren contributed to his death".

The jury also found other serious failings by the cops.

Restraint

Darren's medical cause of death was multiple organ failure resulting from cocaine use in association with restraint and related physical exertion.

The 32 year old was one of five black men to die after use of force by police in 2017.

The inquest heard that police used what may have been excessive and probably avoidable restraint on Darren while he was suffering from mental health problems.



PROTESTING FOR justice for Darren in 2017

PICTURE: GEOFF DEXTER

The restraint included baton strikes, physical strikes, punches, stamping, Tasers and handcuffing.

Darren had been released from prison in May 2017 and was living at a bail hostel in Nuneaton. On 10 July 2017 staff contacted police to raise

concerns about his behaviour. Darren had suffered depression and anxiety, and appeared agitated and afraid.

He went into a small toilet cubicle after police arrived.

Seven officers entered the cubicle and hit Darren with batons, discharged Tasers

three times and directed an incapacitant spray, PAVA, at Darren.

Officers also punched him multiple times and stamped on him.

It isn't clear that Darren was posing any threat to the officers. Darren was

then restrained and taken to a police van. Police again restrained Darren on the ground when he was removed from the van and taken into George Elliot Hospital.

The inquest heard Darren was hyperventilating when he was taken into the emergency department. He was further restrained in the hospital, despite saying the handcuffs were too tight.

He remained in mechanical restraints at the hospital for over an hour. He died on 19 July.

Pathologist Dr Hunt told the inquest that he was confident the restraint had contributed to Darren's death.

Darren's sister Carla said she hoped the conclusions would stop police from using harmful restraint. "All citizens need equal rights and justice and to be treated with care," she said.

Director of the Inquest campaigning group Deborah Coles said, "There is no justification for the brutal use of force Warwickshire police deployed against Darren.

"Such violence is no way to respond to a man experiencing a mental health crisis."

The terrible toll of 2017

Darren Cumberbatch died on 19 July 2017.

■ Four days later Rashan Charles died in Hackney, east London, after being pinned down by police.

■ The previous weekend, Shane Bryant was restrained in a Leicestershire town after a supermarket robbery. Bryant became "ill" and was taken to hospital. He died two days later.

■ A month earlier, Edson da Costa was restrained by officers in Beckton, east London, after a vehicle stop.

He was taken to hospital and never recovered.

■ In November 2017 Nuno Cardoso died in Oxford after he was restrained by police officers.

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Fury at firm's cruel plan to shut special needs school

Outsourcer Elysium's scheme to close Crossley Manor school in Merseyside shows the danger of running education for profit, writes **Sadie Robinson**

 **PARENTS** and workers are furious at news that a school for vulnerable children is set to close—and say the decision is about money.

Crossley Manor School in Rainhill, Merseyside, is set to close at the end of term. The move will severely disrupt the lives of children with autism and other special educational needs, and leave them with nowhere to go.

It shows the risks of putting key services in the hands of private firms.

One staff member told Socialist Worker, "We feel the closure of the school is simply a business move due to low pupil numbers not bringing in enough revenue from local authority funding, and plans for alternative use for the building."

The worker pointed out that it's good to teach children with extra needs in schools that have relatively low numbers.

Worry

"Some of these children have waited well over a year for a place at this school," they continued. "Parents are very upset and beside themselves with worry. Family plans and holidays are being thrown into chaos."

Some parents have denounced the move as a "failed experiment playing with children's lives". One challenged the firm on Facebook. "It seems our children weren't making you enough money, but they cannot just be cast aside with no regard," said Donna Lunt.

"You are denying them their right to an education."

The closure will create distress and confusion for vulnerable children. And it won't be straightforward for them to simply find alternative



CLOSURE WOULD leave classrooms at Crossley Manor empty—and deny vulnerable children their education

schools. Steve Lunt said his son Christopher "had lots of problems in mainstream school and went to a couple before being excluded as they couldn't meet his needs".

"This is going to be a massive upheaval."

Crossley Manor is run by private health firm Elysium Healthcare. It announced the decision just weeks before the planned closure.

The worker said, "All staff are to be made redundant from 24 July. All feel abandoned and without any support in finding alternative employment.

"One child wanted to give his birthday money to the school so it would stay open for him."

This child, Charlie Cheshire, had waited more than 16 and a half months to attend the school. His mother Susan told a local newspaper that the school's closure would leave Charlie "isolated, scared and confused".

"He thinks it's his fault because of how he processes things," she said. "He couldn't read or write before he went there and now he can, because of the amazing work by staff."

"He doesn't want to go to another school. With his needs, he finds it hard to cope with change. It already took 20 months to get him comfortable to go there in the taxi—it's going to be new changes all over again."

"It's heartbreaking."

Marie Rimmer, Labour MP for St Helens South and Whiston, has blamed government education funding.

She said the Tories have "failed to give local authorities the resources required" to support children outside mainstream schools.

Parents challenge heartless cuts through courts

 **PARENTS** have launched a High Court challenge to government funding for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The challenge could lead to a ruling that the Tories' last autumn budget was not set lawfully and left children without the support they need.

The court heard that lack of support for SEND children risks "blighting their rights forever".

Jenni Richards QC said chancellor Philip

Hammond and education secretary Damian Hinds have acted unlawfully and created a "genuine crisis".

Richards said Hammond acted unlawfully when setting the budget in October last year, and Hinds acted unlawfully by refusing to increase funding in December.

"The direct result is that children are not being

properly educated, notwithstanding the fact that parliament has required their needs to be met," she continued.

"The critical underfunding means the most vulnerable may not even receive the basic educational provision they require".

Parents gathered

outside the Royal Courts of Justice in London as the case got underway last Wednesday.

Parents said their children were being "overlooked" and being denied their "human rights".

Government changes have put more pressure on councils—while funding cuts mean they have less money.

Until 2014 councils were responsible for children with special needs up to the age of 18, but this then rose

to the age of 25.

Three families who have children with special needs are fighting the court case.

Solicitor Anne-Marie Irwin said it was the first time the government has been taken to court over its SEND funding decisions.

Parent Kirsty, whose son Benedict has struggled to access support for mental health issues, said the problems are "being caused at the top".

"We are determined to ensure the government is held to account," she said.

Elysium all about profit

ELYSIUM

Healthcare was formed in December 2016 through a merger of Partnerships in Care and the Priory Group.

It is owned by the private equity firm BC Partners.

Elysium calls itself a "provider of specialist health and care services".

It has rapidly expanded, sucking up contracts to deliver key services to vulnerable people.

These saw its revenue soar to £176.8 million in 2017.

A company report in 2017/18 said, "Although Elysium entered the market with 22 sites, a strategic acquisition plan quickly grew the group to over 50 sites in five core divisions."

Its "acquisitions" included Raphael Healthcare, Badby Group, Stanley House, Broadham Care, Ann House, Gregory House, The Limes and Lighthouse Healthcare.

And its five divisions are Mental Health and Wellbeing, Neurological Services, Learning Disabilities and Autism, Children and Education and Private Patient Services.

The firm says it aims to "give children and young people the right care at the right time in the right place".

"Our objective is to enable children and young people to be healthy, confident and happy living in their community," it adds.

Support staff jobs slashed

 NEW figures have shown that the number of teaching assistants in English secondary schools has fallen by four percent in just one year.

Around 2,500 teaching assistant posts have gone.

The GMB union said the cuts were putting the future of an entire generation of children at risk.

GMB national officer Nadine Houghton said, "Without support staff, children with additional needs will be left without the specialist support they need."



Protesting outside court

IN BRIEF

Protesters say no to a US war on Iran

OVER 200 people joined a protest against US president Donald Trump's threats to Iran last week.

It was called by the Stop the War Coalition (STWC).

STWC convenor Lindsey German said that the protest was the start of a campaign and that nobody should underestimate the threat of war.

● Don't attack Iran meeting, Tue 16 July, 6pm, Portcullis House with Laura Pidcock MP, Owen Jones and others

Derby workers say no to extra hours

WORKERS AT Reckitt Benckiser in Derby are set for an indefinite overtime ban over plans to force them to work four weeks extra a year.

Some 160 members will start the overtime ban at the Sinfin Lane plant on 11 July.

Bosses at the health, hygiene and home products company want workers to clock-in for an extra 107 or 157 hours a year.

Bosses grow up at Peter Pan nursery

WORKERS AT the Peter Pan Nursery in Wrexham were celebrating last week after bosses agreed to recognise their Unite union.

The nursery workers were due to strike for three days from 2 July.

This caused bosses to back down after a 22-month battle.

Strike in pipeline at St Fergus gas plant

WORKERS ARE to vote on strikes at the St Fergus gas plant in north east Scotland.

The dispute relates to safety concerns and attacks on the terms and conditions of Unite union construction workers at the plant near Peterhead.

It processes oil and gas from offshore installations in the North Sea.

Construction workers employed by the Wood Group Industrial Service on the Shell-owned site voted by 98 percent in a consultative ballot to move ahead with an industrial action ballot.

Pensions court win for firefighters' FBU

THE FBU firefighters' union has secured a major victory in its long-running dispute with the government.

The firefighters' pension scheme was substantially worsened in 2015. The FBU argued parts of the new scheme were unlawful on age, sex and race discrimination grounds.

The Supreme Court has now refused the government's application to appeal a ruling which it lost in December.

The case will now go back to an employment tribunal to work out a remedy.

RETAIL WORKERS



HUNDREDS OF Usdaw union members at Sainsbury's Waltham Point depot struck for 24 hours last Thursday. They are fighting changes to the attendance policy that will make it easier to discipline workers. In a ballot they voted 73 percent for action.

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

CIVIL SERVICE

Outsourced workers plan an indefinite strike

by NICK CLARK

CLEANERS AND caterers at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Beis) in central London are set to begin an indefinite strike this month.

The members of the PCS union are demanding that their employers—outsourcers Aramark and ISS—pay them the London Living Wage of £10.55 an hour.

They have already held a series of strikes over pay since January this year.

Now they are preparing to escalate their battle, beginning their strike on Monday 15 July.

They will be joined by porters, security and post room workers who are also set to strike for five days from Monday 22 July.

FIGHTING CLOSURE



Protesting against closure

The strikers will need solidarity from across the trade union movement, including fundraising and delegations to the picket lines.

● Join the picket line as workers walk out. Mon 15 July, 12 noon. Beis, 1 Victoria St, Westminster, London SW1E 5ND

■ THE THREAT of a strike at London's Tate Galleries has led to an improved pay deal from bosses.

It came after 95 percent of PCS and Prospect union members voted for strikes.

The employer "found some additional funds" after the vote.

POWER

ENERGY WORKERS at Drax power plant are set to stage the first 48-hour walkout in a dispute over pay on 14 July.

Almost 400 Unite union members at the Selby plant are due to strike for five more 48-hour periods.

They want an improvement on the 2.8 percent pay deal offered by bosses. Workers, who supply 7 percent of Britain's electricity, are walking out alongside GMB union members.

NHS ROUND-UP

HEALTH visitors in Lincolnshire have announced strikes over pay and working conditions.

The Unite union members, who work for Tory-run Lincolnshire County Council, plan a 48-hour walkout from Monday 15 July.

The 58 workers were on the NHS Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales.

Workers on this scale received small pay increases

TRANSPORT

New strikes in airport fight

DISPUTES ARE continuing to hit Aberdeen and Glasgow airports, both owned by AGS Airports Limited.

The Unite union members are fighting over pay and attacks on their pension scheme.

These break an Acas mediators' agreement made in 2016 to keep the scheme open to existing members.

Seven new strike dates have been announced at Glasgow Airport with the first action planned for Wednesday this week.

Another strike was set for Friday this week, and then each day from Thursday of next week until 15 July.

Airport staff, including security officers, fire safety workers, airfield operations officers and engineering

technicians, will all take part.

Pat McIlvogue, Unite's regional industrial officer, said members had overwhelmingly rejected the latest pay and pension offer from management and so far discussions with employers had resulted in "minimal progress".

He added that "the issue here is the attack on our members' deferred pay through the closure of their pension scheme, and a pay offer which doesn't even get close to matching the pay rises and the bonuses the boardroom receives".

Meanwhile strikes at Aberdeen Airport were postponed last week for further talks.

And on Monday there was an announcement of a new ballot.

RMT UNION CONFERENCE

'We back Chris Williamson'

A RESOLUTION supporting Chris Williamson MP was one of the motions passed at the RMT union conference last week.

There were also resolutions supporting the workers of Venezuela against any coup, and the workers of Cuba against new restrictions from Donald Trump's government.

There was also a motion asking for the RMT to speak to the Cuban ambassador to raise concerns about the recent banning of a Pride march.

Another motion which was passed was about the need to

continue to organise against racism and fascism and to provide stewards on demos.

There were two motions on Brexit.

One which asked that we continue to support an exit and oppose the EU, and another that we change our minds and support the Remain campaign.

The motion in favour of leaving won convincingly.

The union also vowed to continue the current political policy that we only support those politicians who support our aims.

Phil Rowan, delegate to conference

ROUND-UP

THERE COULD be a national train strike down the line after the Tory government and transport bosses failed to give sufficient pledges on workers' pensions.

The RMT transport union said it is now preparing a ballot for action.

Its members want "cast iron assurances" that there will be no undermining of the current pension agreements.

■ RMT UNION members working for outsourcing giant ISS plan a 48-hour strike against new shift patterns that will mean

them working an additional 60 shifts per year.

They are subcontracted to the Hitachi rail contract supplying rolling stock to Great Western Railway services.

After voting unanimously for strikes they were set to walk out for two days from 8pm on Tuesday 9 July.

■ THE UNITE union has suspended strikes planned by 900 First South Yorkshire bus drivers after "constructive and meaningful talks".

Drivers were set to walk out for two days.

Jobs fight at IT firm DXC

DEFIANT WORKERS staged a lunchtime protest on Friday of last week outside their DXC workplace following plans to close it.

Workers report that bosses want to axe around 300 jobs at the IT firm—leaving only 100 people safe from redundancy at the plant in Chesterfield.

Unite rep Colin said, "We're getting support from the community, we feel this

is an attack on the workers at this site, our families and our community."

Bosses initially announced redundancies by the end of July. But workers are demanding this deadline is pushed back, alongside fighting for a strike ballot to save jobs.

● Send messages of support to chesterfieldunite@gmail.com and Tom.Sawyer@unitetheunion.org

as part of a deal last year. They were then transferred to the local authority, where workers also saw small pay increases last year. The health visitors received neither.

■ PHARMACY workers at NHS Tayside in Dundee, Angus and Perth and Kinross, have voted overwhelmingly for strikes over pay and job

evaluation. The Unite union members voted by 100 percent for strikes on a 90 percent turnout.

■ AROUND 300 workers at University Hospital Hairmyres in East Kilbride have overwhelmingly backed strikes over pay.

The GMB union members work as cleaners, domestics and other support staff for outsourcer ISS.

EDUCATION

Strikes stop school sell-off plan in Essex

by JANET SZPAKOWSKI

STRIKERS AT Waltham Holy Cross school in Waltham Abbey, Essex, won a victory last week.

NEU union members there began a three-day strike on Tuesday of last week against a plan to turn the school into an academy.

News came to workers on the picket line last Thursday that academisation of the school had been postponed.

NEU joint general secretary Kevin Courtney said it was "a great day for the Waltham Holy Cross community".

"Members and parents working together have shown that academisation is not a forgone conclusion and can be resisted," he said.

Threat

Clearly there is still some way to go to see off the threat altogether.

But campaigners, strikers and the national NEU union sees this as a victory.

Jill Pullen, chair of the interim executive board of the schools, told campaigners that the academisation would not be implemented on 1 July as had been feared.

She said she would withdraw letters to staff about their transfer to a new



PICKETS READ Socialist Worker's coverage of their dispute

PICTURE: JANET SZPAKOWSKI

employer. This achievement came as a result of the strikes and the Hands Off WHX campaign.

NEU rep Ben Collin said it was a great relief that workers could walk into work on Monday knowing that they are still a community school.

Shaunagh Roberts, one of the leaders of the Hands Off campaign, said that she knows that the fight is not

over and that they will carry on fighting.

■ NEU UNION members at Ilford County High School in Redbridge, east London, were set to strike on Wednesday over excessive workload.

Workers say they face a proposed restructure that will cut their pay and drive up workloads even more.

● Send messages of support to roywills@aol.com

■ WORKERS WHO drive and escort disabled children to school in east London were set to walk out this Thursday and Tuesday of next week.

The Unite union members are fighting for a £50 weekly payment for split shifts—when workers are on duty for two separate periods during a day.

The workers say that they are also asked to do extra duties in their own time.

SCHOOLS



Workers strike a confident mood on the picket line

School workers in Scotland reject blather from bosses

TEACHERS AT two schools in North Lanarkshire, Scotland, have struck over health concerns.

NASUWT union members at Buchanan High School held a week long walkout that ended on Wednesday of last week. And teachers at St Ambrose High School launched a four-day strike last Tuesday.

Four former pupils and current teachers have all been treated for bladder cancer since the schools opened in Coatbridge in 2012.

And for a period blue water ran from the schools' taps.

The schools are built on a domestic rubbish and steelworks waste material landfill site that closed in the 1970s.

During the period of operation an estimated half a million tonnes of domestic refuse from Coatbridge was

deposited at the site. And in addition to this 77,000 gallons of wet sewage and unspecified residue from Gartsherrie Steel Works were disposed of there annually.

Many parents back the action. A big and angry public meeting last month heard parents make clear their concerns about their children's health.

Jane Peckham, NASUWT national officer for Scotland, said, "We will continue to take all practical steps to protect their health and welfare, including further industrial action in the new academic year."

The Scottish government has been pushed to set up a panel to look into health and safety fears as well as the history, construction and maintenance of the campus.

The investigation is expected to be completed by the start of the next school year.

FURTHER EDUCATION

Hundreds protest over cuts in West Midlands

AROUND 400 people joined a protest last Saturday to defend Stourbridge College in the West Midlands, which faces closure.

Students there will be expected to travel to Dudley or Halesowen colleges, which will cost more time and money.

■ WORKERS AT Bradford College were set to walk out for three days from Wednesday over job cuts and pay.

UCU union members are fighting bosses' plans to slash 131 jobs. They are also demanding a pay rise after receiving just 1 percent in the last 11 years. UCU members have

already struck for seven days this year over pay. Strikes at other colleges have won pay rises and improvements to contracts and conditions.

■ WORKERS AT Nottingham College struck on Monday over bosses' plans to impose new contracts.

Bosses have threatened to dismiss workers who don't sign up to them.

Ex-chair of the UCU at Nottingham university Howard Stevenson said, "If you don't fight you have no chance of winning. If you do fight you have that chance." It was a very well supported strike. Richard Buckwell

HIGHER EDUCATION

Struggle for a living wage at Birmingham university

WORKERS AT Birmingham University staged an impressive one-day strike last Friday.

Strikers from grounds maintenance, catering and admin sections held large, lively pickets at every entrance to the campus. It's the latest action in the Unison union members' long-running fight for £8.21 an hour.

The vice chancellor David

PAY AND PENSIONS

THE UCU union has announced a timetable for strike ballots over pay and pensions in universities.

The move comes as workers face renewed attacks on their USS pension scheme, and a below-inflation pay offer.

The ballots will run from

Eastwood has an annual salary of £444,000.

Yet strikers spoke of being unable to afford to run a car, using food banks, and having to take second jobs to survive.

Students and the Unite and FBU unions showed solidarity.

Speakers at a 100-strong rally included Dave Muritu, a victimised UCU union rep from a nearby college.

Jenny Austen

SCHOOLS ROUND-UP

Workers walk out to stop Yorkshire school closure

WORKERS AT The Grove Academy in Harrogate, north Yorkshire, walked out on Thursday of last week. It was the fourth strike in a fight to stop cuts that unions say will force the school to close.

Unison, NEU and NASUWT members struck together. Workers previously walked out on 13, 19 and 20 June.

The Grove is a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), which teaches children who have been excluded from mainstream schools.

Bosses want to make redundancies after the school is set to lose two thirds of its budget by 2020.

● Send messages of support to Lesley.davis@neu.org.uk

■ STAFF AT the John Roan School in south east London ended a week of action

against academisation with a strike on Thursday of last week.

It followed a lobby of a Greenwich council meeting on the previous evening and a walkout on Tuesday.

Strikers were defiant in their willingness to resist the takeover of their school by United Learning Trust (ULT).

Striker Shah told Socialist Worker, "I think it was a political decision. The school used to be rated as excellent.

"Then Ofsted came in and all of a sudden we were in special measures."

NEU union members have earmarked four more days of strikes this term to stop the imposition of a new appraisal scheme and attacks on other conditions.

● Send messages of support to johnroannut@gmail.com



POLICE AND security forces attacked demonstrations, but protesters were defiant

PICTURE: PA

HUGE PROTESTS ERUPT IN SUDAN

by CHARLIE KIMBER

HUGE demonstrations swept Sudan last Sunday demanding an end to military rule.

By 6.30pm protesters had reached the presidential palace in the capital Khartoum, braving repeated police assaults and shots being fired in the air.

A spokesperson for an opposition group told Socialist Worker, "Nothing on Earth stops the Sudanese people from their demand for human dignity, freedom, peace and justice."

"No bullets, no teargas canisters, no violence whatsoever breaks their will and determination."

The Central Committee of Sudan Doctors said four people were killed in Khartoum's twin city of Omdurman.

Meanwhile one protester died after being hit by a bullet in the chest in the town of Atbara.

Regime forces also opened fire on protesters in the eastern city of Kassala. Around 200 people were injured,

some very seriously. The opposition to Sudan's military rulers had called a "march of millions" in an effort to step up the pressure on the Transitional Military Council (TMC).

Sudanese police fired tear gas in an effort to disperse protesters in Khartoum.

Tens of thousands of protesters were chanting, "Civilian rule," when police attacked crowds in the northern Khartoum district of Bahri. They also attacked protests in Mamura and Arkweit in the capital's east.

Flooded

Protesters flashing victory signs and carrying Sudanese flags had flooded the streets of the Al-Sahafa neighbourhood of Khartoum.

"We are here for the martyrs of the 3 June sit-in," said protester Zeinab. "We want a civilian state that guarantees our freedom. We want to get rid of military dictatorship."

"No one gave a mandate to the military council, all the people are against the council," said another protester who shouted out, "I'm the next martyr." Others



Up to 2,000 people joined a solidarity demonstration in central London last Sunday

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

chanting, "Blood for blood" took to the streets of the Jabra district. Rallies were also took place in other neighbourhoods of the capital.

On the road to the airport, security forces moved to block off crowds of demonstrators, an AFP agency correspondent reported.

Security forces used tear gas against demonstrators in the capital's twin city of Omdurman and the eastern town of Gadaref, witnesses said.

Huge marches also took place in El Obeid city, the capital of north Kordofan, El Daein, the capital of the state of East Darfur and Alqadarif city, capital of the state of Qadarif.

Strikes

Sunday is the first day of the working week in Sudan, and there were some strikes to join the protests.

These strikes, if they are spread and generalised, can break the military.

The TMC has very little popular support.

It relies for its survival on the brute force of the murderous Rapid Support Forces

and other units, and the backing of regional powers Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

These are supplied and armed by Western powers, including Britain, and then hand on these weapons to Sudan's killer regime.

It was the grossest hypocrisy for British foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt to tweet in support of the protests on Sunday.

His government has fuelled Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen and given it arms that it passes on to Sudan.

And Britain, alongside the EU, has aided the Sudanese regime with funds to "combat illegal migration".

The courage and determination of the Sudanese people can overcome the regime if they use all their strength.

That means breaking from outside arbitration and talks with the military, and building on the power of strikes and mass mobilisations.

On other pages
Miners fight sexual harassment >>Page 8